

# INFORMATION REPORT

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SUBJECT Communist Party Organization and  
Activities at the Eotvoes Lorand  
University in Budapest

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1. University life in Hungary was dominated by Communist Party organizations and their ideological agitation. The influence of the Communist Party was so great at the Boetvoes Lorand University that selections of members of the faculty for advancement were made on the basis of Party membership rather than competence; non-Party members, although competent in their fields, were not promoted. Most heads of departments at the University were members of the Communist Party; only a few professors had managed to remain in their positions without joining the Party. The CP was anxious to recruit prominent scientists to serve as examples. Membership in the Communist Party imposed so many extracurricular duties that the member became a veritable slave. He had no free time, but he dared not slacken his Party work lest he be removed from the membership list entirely or demoted to candidate. Under such conditions, in which ideology and dialectical materialism had to be combined with purely scientific work, the latter naturally suffered. I have known of professors who asked colleagues to insert the required quotations into lectures because they themselves were not sufficiently versed in the intricacies of sandwiching irrelevant, ideological quotations into scientific lectures.

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CLASSIFICATION SECRET/SECURITY INFORMATION

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2. As late as the Summer of 1947 any person could join the Communist Party upon the recommendation of two members; at that time the Party forced the Social Democratic Party to unite into a common party under the name of the Hungarian Workers' Party (Magyar Dolgozo Partja - MDP); the entire membership came under the new party. Within one year the Communists had acquired control of the Party. In 1948--49 there was a re-evaluation of the membership of the MDP; the purpose of this re-evaluation was to eliminate the unreliable elements in the former Social Democratic Party. During the re-evaluation no new members were accepted into the MDP. Each member had to submit a curriculum vitae which was used as the basis for an oral examination before the Party Committee. If a member could not satisfy the requirements, on ideological, attitude, and class origin, he was excluded from the Party or reduced to the status of a candidate.
3. The Eotvos Lorand University in February 1952 had a student body of approximately 5,000; the staff, including teachers, laboratory workers, mechanics and other manual workers, numbered about 500. The organization of the Communist Party at the University was parallel to the organization of the University itself. The set-up of the Party in the Department of Natural Sciences will serve as a concrete example of the manner in which the Party was organized throughout the University. In this Department there were some 2,000 students and a staff of about 300 persons. Sixty per cent of the student body belonged to the Communist Party as well as 75 per cent of the staff. Until 1951 all Party members and candidates, students and staff of the University met together. It was soon apparent that for reasons of discipline it would be better to have separate groups for students and staff; it often happened that a student was a better Communist than his professor. Consequently, the student body was organized on the basis of years of study; i.e., first year students in the Institute were members of first year student Party Groups, etc.
4. The smallest unit of the CP at the Eotvos Lorand University was the Party Group (Partcsoport); in all there were about 20 Party Groups at the University. There was one Party Group in every Institute of the Department of Natural Sciences. Party Groups included both members of the Communist Party and candidates for membership. The Physical Chemical Institute had a teaching staff of 16; of this number, eight were in the Party Group, six CP members and two candidates for membership. Members of the Party Group elected one of their group as trustee. It was his responsibility to handle the administrative work, i.e., collection of membership dues, information on Party Group members and administrative announcements. It was his duty to watch the professional work of not only the members of the Party Group but also other students. He observed their interrelationships, and at his own discretion reported irregularities either to the Party leadership or to the authorities of the Institute. If the members were lax in their work for the Party, attending meetings, etc., they were called to task by the trustee. It was necessary that he be informed of any proposed changes in the Institute so as to coordinate the Party work with the new conditions. Party dues were only two or three forints per month but every month members were expected to contribute an additional sum amounting to one and a half per cent of their salary. The Party Group held meetings once a week. Until December 1951 Party Groups held separate meetings; since that time several Party Groups have combined for meetings. Attendance at these meetings was obligatory for all members and candidates. Discussions dealt with evaluation of the professional work performed at the Institute not only by members of the CP but by non-members as well; ideological attitudes, and the appraisal of possible candidates for membership in the CP. Current political events were also discussed.

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5. The next organizational unit of the CP in size was the Basic Organ (Allapszerv) which was composed of several Party Groups. There were two Basic Organs in the Department of Natural Sciences, one to which the teaching staff belonged and one composed of laboratory workers, technicians, and administrative personnel. The Basic Organs also included both CP members and candidates. Each Basic Organ had a chairman, a secretary, a treasurer and a public relations officer (Kaderes). It was the duty of the public relations officer to keep well informed about all members and candidates, their work and ideological attitudes. The Basic Organ held its meetings once a month, and attendance was obligatory for all members and candidates. These meetings lasted at least three or four hours. Subjects discussed included contemporary political and professional problems, Party discipline, and the acceptance of new Party members.
6. Every enterprise or institution such as the University had a Party Secretary who was independent of the Basic Organ. He was the highest functionary, the master mind of Party activities at the University. He saw to it that the Party policy was carried out in the University. [redacted] a former factory worker, was the Party Secretary at the University [redacted] in February 1952; his salary was more than that of a professor.
7. Applicants for membership in the Communist Party were considered on the basis of ideological attitude, attendance at mass meetings, family background, and proficiency in professional work. An applicant remained a candidate from six months to two years, but admission to candidacy did not guarantee acceptance as a member of the Communist Party. The candidate had to prove himself worthy of the distinction of becoming a member of the Party. If in the course of his candidacy he was lax in his work for the Party, he was excluded from the status of candidate or his candidate status was extended until he proved himself worthy. A candidate not only had to attend all group meetings but also any other meetings sponsored by the Party. Candidates did not have the right to vote. A candidate was expected to volunteer for Party work; he was expected to take part in house to house agitation, in peasant or worker education and propaganda work in villages, etc. He had to follow the orders of the Party to the letter and submit to Party discipline. After six months the candidate could apply for membership in the Communist Party upon the recommendation of his Party Group. Selection of members to the CP was made in the Basic Organ. After the Secretary of the Basic Organ had received the recommendation from the Party Group, he collected other data concerning the candidate such as his autobiography, letters from Party members, etc. At the monthly meeting of the Basic Organ, the candidate was subjected to an oral examination to ascertain his political attitude. He had to answer all questions put to him at the meeting. Finally, the members of the Basic Organ voted on the acceptance of the candidate into the Party ranks. As a result of disciplinary measures a member could be re-evaluated; he could be ousted from the Party or reduced to the status of candidate.
8. Members of the Communist Party who showed exceptional ability in agitation and leadership were sent to special Party schools, for courses requiring three months, one year, or two years. Students at these schools attended lectures on the history of the Communist Party, discussed ideological indoctrination; they also did independent study utilizing Party material. The one and two year Party schools were set up in 1949 for the purpose of raising the ideological level of Party members.

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9. Everyone who worked for a salary in Hungary was required to belong to a trade union. University employees belonged to the trade union which corresponded to their occupation and place of work; the teaching staff belonged to the Pedagogical Trade Union. Students of chemistry could belong to the Chemical Industry Union, Junior Section. Union dues were one and a half per cent of the salary, payable monthly. Every Institute on the campus had its union trustee who collected the dues and carried out all administrative work and, in general, protected the interests of the union. The Union Committee of the Pedagogical Trade Union regulated the affairs of the union and protected the interests of the union and its members. The committee consisted of a chairman, secretary, treasurer, and members of the section for culture, sport, recreation, and professional instruction.
10. In September 1950 military training for university students was instituted to run concurrently with their studies. Women were trained in pharmacy and medicine so that they could serve as medical aids. First year students took military training four hours per week. Second year students continued training and theoretical instruction, and in the summer had to spend one month training in a camp. Students had been told that they would not have to go in the army after going through the university military training. The army duty lasted three years but there was a rumor in 1952 that military duty would be extended to five years. A careful check was kept of all military training; progress of the student, his attendance at courses and training were noted on his record.
11. Other activities sponsored by the Communist Party to which the students might belong were the following:
  - (a). Democratic Youth Organization (Demokratikai Ifjusag Szoeretsege - DISZ) which every person under 26 years of age was urged to join. The publication of this organization was Szabad Ifjusag (Free Youth). Members had to attend monthly meetings and pay dues of one forint per month.
  - (b). Munkara Harcra Kesz (Ready for Work and for Battle) was another movement which everyone from 10 to 45 was urged to join. The purpose of this movement was to prepare the people physically so that they would be ready to defend freedom. It was primarily concerned with sport although there were also glider groups and aviation groups. Each member endeavored to reach a certain standard in one of five different sports; ie, running, distance walking, swimming, bicycling, weight throwing. Competitions were held once a year. The member who excelled in one of these sports received a document certifying that he had won either a gold, silver, or bronze medal; they did not actually receive the medals.
  - (c). Szabadsag Harcos (Fighter for Freedom) was an organization which all persons from the age of 15 to 50 were urged to join. Members received training in Morse code, radio operation and repair; they were also trained in target shooting and the operation and repair of automobiles and other motor vehicles.

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